

# Every Child Learning Every Day



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An early childhood newsletter from the State Department of Education — [www.sde.state.id.us/dept](http://www.sde.state.id.us/dept)

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## READY TO LEARN

### Cooler weather's time to snuggle

By Dr. Stan Steiner

Doing things together with friends, family or relatives brings rewards for all. Here are some books to encourage interaction.

**"Can You Cuddle Like a Koala?"** by John Butler, 2003/2005, Peachtree, Pre K. Each page contains beautiful lifelike illustrations of animals and wonderful vocabulary embedded in a doable action challenge for little folks.

**"Salad People and More Real Recipes,"** by Mollie Katzen, 2005, Tricycle Press. This cool recipe book comes with rave reviews from the food samplers. Simple illustrations, combined with instructions for adults, safety tips and suggested childhood tools added to the recipe, make a unique and enjoyable cookbook for all ages.

**"Ziggy's Blue-Ribbon Day,"** by Claudia Mills, 2005, FSG. Today was field day at school and Ziggy already knew what was going to happen. He would get gray ribbons for last place in all the events. Ziggy was good at drawing, not sports. His artistic talents prove to be worth a blue ribbon with the other children.

**"Back into Mommy's Tummy,"** Thierry Robberecht, 2004/2005, Clarion Books. This charming book would be great for helping young children prepare for the arrival of a new sibling. Feelings of uncertainty about not being the center of attention and mother's growing stomach are handled in a gentle manner.

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## Celebrate Family Reading Week with books, stories

Dear Reader:

I invite you and the young children in your lives to participate in Family Reading Week Nov. 13-19.

The Idaho State Library does a terrific job leading our state's observance and sending information to local libraries to help promote this important family activity in their communities.

I encourage you to visit your library during this time and check out some of your favorite titles or find a new favorite. Family reading week also should include some special activities and the folks at the Idaho State Library have many good ideas. One of my favorites is "Family Stories."

Telling stories helps young children understand their family's history and their connections to it.

Here are some "story starters"



Dr. Marilyn Howard

to help begin the conversation.

- We have a very interesting ancestor in our family. He/she was ...
- We have a family tradition that we do

every (name the holiday) ...

- This is how we celebrate ...
- Our family had an amazing experience with a natural disaster. It was a (tornado/hurricane/flood/blizzard/fire).
- We remember how \_\_\_\_\_ got the scar on his/her \_\_\_\_\_.
- This is what happened ...
- Our parents really thought it was funny when I ...
- We have a very special pet in our family. It is a ...
- One of us in the family had scary/funny/sad experience with an animal ...

Telling stories can become a tradition that can become an important element of family gatherings.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### 'Buggy Rides' also help promote social skills

Physical Education (P.E.) Central is a website ([www.pecentral.org](http://www.pecentral.org)) where educators share lesson plans for activities aimed at different age groups.

**Activity:** Buggy Rides

**Purpose:** To help pre-K children learn to work together and use appropriate social skills.

**Materials needed:** Two to four medium sized rectangular-shaped laundry baskets with a looped rope (about 3 feet long) attached to one handle.

**Description:** Tell students that they will be going for a buggy ride. Each of them will have a chance to be a rider and a horse.

They will need to tell their

"horse" when to begin pulling by saying "giddy-up."

One child sits on his bottom in the basket while the other child pulls. Another child can help push if the rider is too heavy for the horse.

Emphasize that the horse must wait for the rider to say "giddy-up" and follow a designated path on the floor at a slow speed. After completing the designated course, the students change roles.

For safety, an adult must monitor the children as they get in and out of the baskets to make sure the horse does not start before the rider is safely seated.

**Variations:** Add other 'polite' words and phrases such as 'please' and 'thank you.' Children with motor

impairments can spend more time riding in the buggy. This activity has worked well for autistic children, who benefit from activities that involve gross motor skills such as pushing and pulling. This activity has been observed to calm some very active children with Down's syndrome as they are pulled in the baskets.

**Assessment ideas:** Students should work together safely and politely.

Riders should acknowledge their horse by communicating with them, i.e., "giddy-up." The horse should acknowledge the rider by waiting until the rider is ready.



## PARENT TIPS

### Accreditation benefits every one

#### By the Idaho Association for Education of Young Children

How do I find quality child care for my child? Looking for programs that are *accredited* is a good place to start. Both home-based and center-based child care settings can participate in national, voluntary accreditation systems that set professional standards for early childhood education programs.

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) sponsors the nationally recognized Family Child Care Accreditation System, designed especially for Family Child Care. Accreditation helps providers set and reach quality improvement goals and helps parents identify high-quality family child care. Currently, Idaho has 10 accredited family child care providers.

Since 1985 the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has administered a national, voluntary accreditation system. Currently Idaho boasts 45 accredited programs, serving more than 2,830 children and their families. Here are some of the benefits of accreditation:

**For children:** Accredited settings offer safe, inviting spaces and warm, nurturing care. Activities are designed on best practices to meet the needs and interests of the individual children while promoting their development.

**For parents:** Accreditation helps parents identify responsive, educated staff. Parents enjoy open communication with staff and know that their children are growing and learning in an environment that uses best practices.

**For employers:** Stable, high-quality child care directly improves employee attendance, morale, and productivity.

**For communities:** Accredited providers help to make communities attractive to families, signaling that children are well cared for and educated during their early years and before and after school, helping to ensure future school success. For information about accredited programs, go to [www.idahoaeYC.org](http://www.idahoaeYC.org) and click on 'Information for Parents'.

## NUTRITION

### New site offers information for families on food pyramid

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>

U.S. Agriculture Secretary

Mike Johanns in September unveiled a child-friendly version of the new MyPyramid Food Guidance System called MyPyramid for Kids.



"This is a fun approach to addressing the very serious problem of childhood obesity," said Johanns. "As

teachers take advantage of the lesson plans and children learn what it takes to win the game, messages about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity will take hold. We know that MyPyramid captured America's attention and our hope is that MyPyramid for Kids will inspire the same level of interest and help to improve the health of America's kids."

MyPyramid for Kids provides age-appropriate information about the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the MyPyramid

Food Guidance System released earlier this year. The new MyPyramid for Kids symbol represents the recommended proportion of food from each food group and focuses on the importance of making smart food choices every day. Daily physical activity is prominent in MyPyramid for Kids.

MyPyramid for Kids encourages children, teachers, and parents to work together to make healthier food choices and be active every day.

More information is available at, [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov). The 2005 Dietary Guidelines are available at [www.healthierUS.gov/dietaryguidelines](http://www.healthierUS.gov/dietaryguidelines).

## SMART STARTS

### Children start learning about transportation early in life

Children learn the building blocks of reading and math skills in the preschool years, but did you know they also are learning the foundations for science and social studies, too?

Idaho expects its students to have an understanding of the political, social, and economic responses to industrial and technological innovations. Parents can help build understanding by identifying the different forms of transportation in your lives.

#### Birth to 1 year

Identify and talk about the common methods of transportation in your lives. For example explain,

"We're going to go to the store in the car;" "look at the airplane in the sky," "Your brother is riding a bike to the park." Read picture books about cars, trucks, and other machines.

#### 1 to 3 years

Ask your child to identify the different vehicles you see during outings and trips together. Help them identify unknown vehicles and what they do. Pretend to be a train.

#### 3 to 5 years

Talk about different forms of transportation. For example, "yellow buses take children to school;" "farmers use tractors to help grow

food." Ask your child about different vehicles that you see, i.e., "What do you suppose that tractor trailer is for?"

#### Skills needed for kindergarten

Identify simple means of transportation and simple machines used at home.

#### Additional resources

**Diggers & Dumpers** (Things That Go Board Books), 1996. **Freight Train Board Book** (Caldecott Collection), Donald Crews, Greenwillow, 1996. **Cars and Trucks and Things That Go**, Richard Scarry, Golden Books, 1998.

## ART

### Use leaves in fun project that highlights differences

By Jennifer Williams

2002 Idaho Teacher of the Year

Autumn is a magical time for preschool children to do activities that can enhance early childhood curriculum.

On a blustery day, a walk in the park is like looking through a kaleidoscope. The leaves that are falling from the trees are multicolored and beautiful.

Leaf piles can be formed by color: yellow, orange, red, or by shape: oval, oblong, or tree-shaped. It is important for small children to be able to point out the differences they see in color and shape. Such an outing can be the first step in seeing differences through observation (visual or perceptual awareness).

Young children should be encouraged to collect their favorite leaves and talk about what makes them the same, different, or their favorites. At home, the leaves can be classified by their differences or similarities and used to make a scrapbook.

#### Materials:

- Two pieces of construction paper in fall colors
- Six sheets of white paper
- Package of fall stickers
- Yellow, red, green and brown color crayons
- A poem (Preferably composed with the help of your preschooler. Below is my poem.)  
"Yellow leaves are in the air.

Red ones, too, are everywhere. Brown and green are put in piles.

I see leaves for miles and miles."

The scrapbook can have a front and back made from construction paper with a title on the front that reads, "Autumn Leaves."

Stickers can be used to decorate the cover. The second page will be the poem, followed by individual pages of leaf rubbings. (Hold a leaf on a sheet of paper and rub a crayon over the top of the leaf and onto the paper. Remove the leaf to see the outline of the leaf). Many times, children will point out similarities and differences that grown-ups never even notice. Happy leaf hunting!